



**FISCAL
YEAR END
PROGRESS
REPORT**

Province of British Columbia
April 15, 1991

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Province of
British Columbia

Office of the
Premier

MEMORANDUM

To: All B.C. Public Servants

May 13, 1991

91-06530/

From: Deputy Ministers

Subject: Service Quality B.C. Fiscal Year End Progress Report

In January 1991 we presented each member of the B.C. Public Service with a copy of the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan. In the interest of keeping all public servants informed of the progress being made on this important initiative, we are now providing each of you with an update of achievements related to this business plan. We are also enclosing a copy of the Service Task Force report to the Deputy Ministers' Council.

The Service Task Force was specifically mandated to provide recommendations on how to enhance and encourage service quality in the long term. Service Quality is an ongoing priority with each of us, and as we consider the recommendations of the Service Task Force we will keep you informed on corporate service quality actions and goals. Meanwhile, remember that you represent the B.C. public service and everything you do to improve service quality in your part of the organization makes a difference.

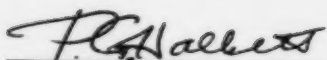
Keep up the good work.

David Emerson
Deputy Minister to the Premier

Gary Mullins
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Advanced Education,
Training and Technology

Bruce Hackett
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food

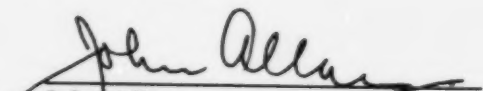
Robert A. Edwards, Q.C.
Deputy Attorney General
Ministry of Attorney General



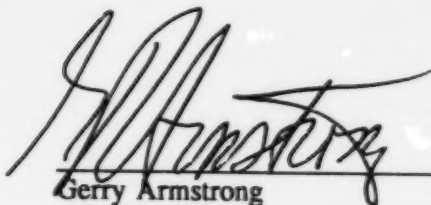
Philip G. Halkett
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Development, Trade
and Tourism



Wayne Desharnais
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Education



John Allan
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Energy, Mines and
Petroleum Resources



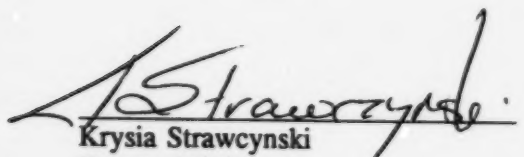
Gerry Armstrong
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Environment



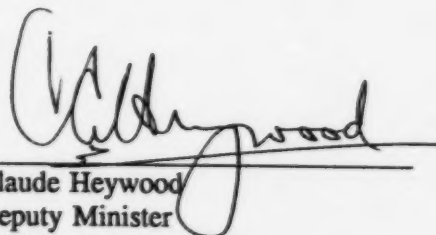
Doug Horswill
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Finance and Corporate
Relations



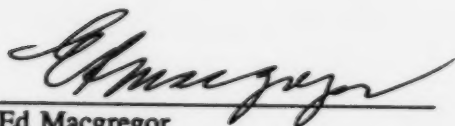
R. S. Plecas
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Forests



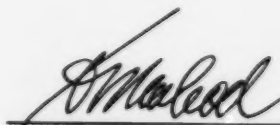
Krysia Strawczynski
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Health and Minister
Responsible for Seniors



Claude Heywood
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Labour and
Consumer Services



Ed Macgregor
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Lands and Parks



Ken MacLeod
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Municipal Affairs,
Recreation and Culture



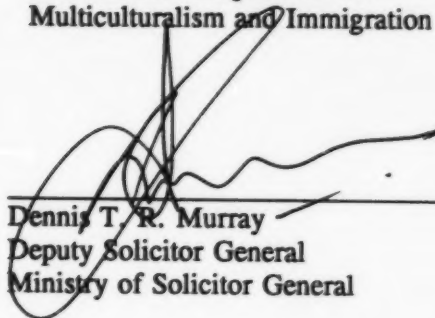
Eric Denhoff
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Native Affairs



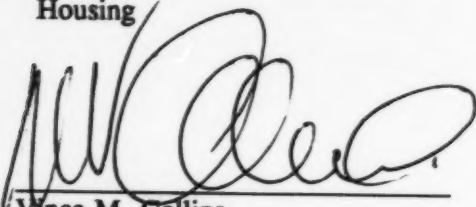
Doug Allen
Deputy Provincial Secretary
Ministry of Provincial Secretary
and Minister Responsible for
Multiculturalism and Immigration



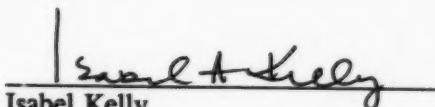
R. K. Butler
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Social Services and
Housing



Dennis T. R. Murray
Deputy Solicitor General
Ministry of Solicitor General



Vince M. Collins
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Transportation and
Highways



Isabel Kelly
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Women's Programs and
Government Services and Minister
Responsible for Families

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past six months, ministries and central agencies across government have been involved in an important new initiative to provide the best possible service to the citizens of British Columbia. Ensuring superior service quality is recognized by many to be as important as prudent fiscal management, sustainable development, and ensuring a healthy society. This report outlines government-wide and ministry initiatives which have been undertaken in response to the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan issued in December 1990.

Highlights from the past six months include:

- Adoption of service quality as a primary objective by most ministries in government. Several can point to significant initiatives which streamline program delivery, improve operational performance, and provide the public with an opportunity to directly comment on the quality of service.
- On-schedule development of Enquiry B.C. and the B.C. Guide: Programs and Services of the provincial Government, which will significantly improve public access to program information.
- The direct participation of more than 3,000 employees in regional consultations, service quality training, and Showcase I and II.
- A renewed commitment to training on the part of many ministries.
- Considerable progress towards a new partnership of ministries and central agencies directed at increased delegation of authority within a framework of sound fiscal management.

The consensus of the Service Task Force members is that an ongoing strategy is needed to sustain staff enthusiasm and commitment and build on early successes. It is recommended that all ministries and central agencies:

- Place a priority on obtaining customer/client feedback from the public.
- Demonstrate their commitment to service quality by incorporating service quality objectives into annual business plans, budgets, and management performance targets.

- Commit a minimum of 3 percent of total annual salary costs to be met over a three-year period to training, and support government-wide training standards.
- Encourage the participation of all branches and staff from across the province through a balanced allocation of resources, regional service quality representatives, and regional/branch responsibility and accountability for service excellence.
- Provide middle and senior level managers with a clear idea of how an organization committed to service quality should work and what executive management's expectations are.
- Support inter-ministerial councils to provide a single, clear focus for program delivery.

Corporately, the task force recommends that:

- Sufficient resources and properly trained staff be in place to guarantee the success of Enquiry B.C. and the B.C. Guide.
- Service quality be a standing agenda item at the Council of Deputy Ministers.
- Treasury Board and Treasury Board Staff shift their emphasis from an input orientation to an output oriented focus.
- The Government Personnel Services Division, in conjunction with the Personnel Council, develop a plan of initiatives which will ensure the B.C. public service is in a position to attract, retain, and continuously develop a pool of management and staff resources, and provide an organizational climate necessary to achieve its service quality objectives.
- Innovation, and the use of technology, be emphasized.
- The Service Quality B.C. Secretariat wind down its operations no later than December 31, 1991.

INTRODUCTION

In August of 1990, Deputy Ministers approved the creation of the Service Quality B.C. Secretariat and appointed the Service Task Force(s) to examine all aspects of service quality management. Specific attention was to be paid to:

- Service to the public,
- Personnel management,
- Financial management,
- Administrative policy,
- Communications and public relations,
- Regional initiatives, and
- Technology issues.

The resulting Service Quality B.C. Business Plan outlined a wide ranging strategy to provide exceptional service to the public.

The plan emphasised that service quality must be ministry driven and customer focused within a framework supported by central agencies. Nine priorities were proposed for government, with specific action plans for each. Foremost was improving public access to government services.

The purpose of this report is to inform Deputy Ministers of progress made to date, and as requested in August of 1990, to provide recommendations on the future direction for government's service quality initiative.

I. SERVICE QUALITY B.C. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

Government can be pleased with the progress which has been made towards its objective of exceptional service quality. Many ministries and some central agencies have made service quality a primary objective. Several have already made significant changes which go far beyond the initial set of goals anticipated in the Business Plan. Progress has also been made towards a new partnership between ministries and central agencies directed at improved performance standards.

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT SERVICES			
a) Toll Free Information Line Implement a toll free telephone information line staffed by well-prepared, superior customer service staff in the Lower Mainland, to provide cross-government program and access to information.	• Cabinet approval obtained • RFP for Enquiry Centre, computer system, and public information campaign let. • Contractor hired • System operational	ON TARGET Mid April July 1, 1991	Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families
b) Program Guide to Government Develop a comprehensive, easily updated user-friendly guide to government programs.	• Detailed action plan developed • Queen's Printer contracted to print and distribute the guide. • All ministries supplied program data to project manager. • All staff on board • Publication	ON TARGET ON TARGET July 31, 1991	Philip G. Halkett Deputy Minister Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism (Government Agents Branch)
c) Create Community Service Quality Council A pilot in Fort St. John to establish a community focused, inter-ministry council to improve information sharing and access to government services at the local level. Progress to be reported to Deputy Ministers' Council March 31, 1991.	• Council of 16 public and private sector representatives formed; Chairperson selected; 4 meetings held; line staff input received. • Prioritize, action plans, and ministry responsibilities established (e.g., community guide/training of front-line staff). • Report to Deputy Ministers' Council	ON TARGET ON TARGET April 30, 1991	Philip G. Halkett Deputy Minister Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism (Government Agents Branch)
d) Community Based Service Guide "Who Does What in Fort St. John" Develop a comprehensive community based service guide that complements the program guide. The guide will include specific addresses, telephone numbers, and services provided in the local community. To be published March 31, 1991.	• Subcommittee of Fort St. John Service Quality Council formed to produce guide. • Draft list of government services prepared. • Final format determined • Guide published	OFF TARGET OFF TARGET June 30, 1991	Philip G. Halkett Deputy Minister Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
e) Develop Standard Revenue Collection Methods Through Nanaimo B.C. Access Centre, pilot standard revenue collection methods, e.g., cross-government acceptance of credit cards, cash payments.	- Survey of clients conducted - Scope of pilot defined (pilot to test trade off between rise, if any, in customer satisfaction and rise, if any, in NSF cheques). - NSF cheque handling procedures developed and approved. - Progress report to Deputies	ON TARGET August 15, 1991	Doug Horswill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (Office of the Comptroller General)
f) Improve Access for Persons with Physical Disabilities Improve service to challenged individuals (e.g., deaf, paraplegic, blind). Due date March 15, 1991.	- Access 2000 program delivered to over 300 employees in Finance & Corporate Relations and Attorney General. - Additional Access 2000 sessions to be delivered to Attorney General and Solicitor General staff. - Attorney General well into third year of a 5 year program to make all Court Houses accessible by physically challenged individuals. - Working group established to bring forward recommendations to the ADM Committee on Social Policy.	ON TARGET June 30, 1991	Joyce Ganong Assistant Deputy Minister Advanced Education, Training and Technology Chairman, Committee on Social Policy
g) Use Plain Language Review statistical publications and releases to ensure the contents are understandable and accessible to a sophisticated lay person.	- Before and after samples of plain language improvements are being assembled. - Review documents as they come up for release.	ON TARGET Ongoing	Doug Horswill Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (Planning and Statistics Division)
h) Innovative Use of Technology to Enhance Service B.C. Systems Corporation and the Science and Technology Team of Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, with selected ministries, to implement plan to expand direct service to the public through technology. Detailed action plan to Deputy Ministers' Council February 15, 1991.	Discussion paper for consideration by Deputy Ministers prepared (Report attached).	ON TARGET April 15, 1991	W. E. Evans President British Columbia Systems Corporation Gary Mullins Deputy Minister Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. PROVIDE TRAINING NECESSARY TO IMPROVE SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC			
a) Ministry Training Plans Individual ministries to have training programs in place by April 1, 1991 to provide: • ministry orientation. • knowledge required for effective, program delivery. • customer service skills.	• 18 of 22 ministries advise training programs planned or in place. • 5 ministries advise all employees to participate in training this year.	OFF TARGET	All Deputy Ministers
b) Service Quality Training Guidelines Service quality training and education guidelines to be developed to assist ministry supervisors and management. To include: • training the trainers. • entry level orientation. • skills for front-line staff (e.g., telephone answering). • service quality leadership skills for supervisors and managers, including executives.	• Service quality incorporated into all Centre for Executive and Management Development programs. • Workshop to "train the trainers" in service quality workshop concepts completed. • Two service quality training modules completed: "Intro to Service Quality" and "Listening to Customers." • 7 more modules in development • Service Quality resource inventory underway. • Service Quality consultants "Vendor Fair" to be held.	ON TARGET September 30, 1991 June 30, 1991 July 31, 1991	Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families (Centre for Executive and Management Development)
c) Celebrate Success The Service Quality B.C. Secretariat to organize a spring showcase following the model of the November session. By March 15, 1991.	• Showcase II, "Yes I Can Make a Difference," held April 10, 1991 in Victoria, Vancouver, Kamloops, Kelowna, and Prince George via interactive video. Included local panels and a case study exercise providing hands-on "how to" advice.	COMPLETE	D. Brian Marston Chairman Service Quality B. C. Secretariat
d) Profile the Small Wins The Service Quality B.C. Secretariat, in cooperation with ministry Service Quality Coordinators, to compile a list of "1001" small wins government wide and distribute to ministries. Emphasis to be placed on regional wins.	• Book on "Small Wins" underway	ON TARGET June 30, 1991	D. Brian Marston Chairman Service Quality B.C. Secretariat

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
4. INCREASE DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY			
a) Enterprise Model (Special Operating Agency)	The Enterprise Model output oriented budgeting method to be developed and demonstrated by select agencies.	ON TARGET	Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families (Purchasing Commission)
	Purchasing Commission: • A Framework Agreement prepared, setting out financial and policy parameters. • Purchasing Commission SOA proposal to Treasury Board. Public Trustee: • Treasury Board approval received to flatten organization structure. • Conditional Treasury Board approval received to operate as self financing agency subject to review of financial structure. • Public Trustee/Treasury Board Staff to negotiate MOU regarding special status. Recommended agencies include: Royal British Columbia Museum, Safety Engineering Services, Land Title Branch, Ministry of Lands and Parks, and Vital Statistics Branch.	April 30, 1991	Robert A. Edwards Q.C. Deputy Attorney General Ministry of Attorney General (Public Trustee)
b) Negotiate Memoranda of Understanding	Central agencies, in partnership with individual ministries, to negotiate ministry-specific memoranda of understanding which provide for increased delegated authority in financial, personnel, administrative and communications management, and increased ministry accountability for achieving performance objectives.	September 30, 1992	Respective Deputy Ministers
c) Expenditure Approvals	Treasury Board Staff to review approval limits with SFO Council and recommend increases where appropriate, by January 30, 1991.	To be determined by Deputy Ministers April 30, 1991	D. Emerson, D. Horne, D. Butler, V. Collins, T. Vakil V. Collins, D. Butler
d) Other	Treasury Board Staff, OCG, with SFO Council, to review the materiality of other approval requirements (e.g., TBS 200a, section 22 accounts and inter-governmental agreements), and recommend their use on a more regular basis to Treasury Board, by January 30, 1991.	OFF TARGET	D. Horne Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
e) Building Management Selected ministries and B.C. Buildings Corporation to pilot greater regional delegation of authority to regional and local managers in ministries and the corporation.	Recommendations from BCBC/Ministry staff Committee accepted by Deputy Minister/CEO Steering Committee for consideration by Council of Deputy Ministers' (Report attached).	ON TARGET To be determined by Deputy Ministers	- Dennis Truss President and CEO - B.C. Buildings Corporation - Robert A. Edwards Q.C. Deputy Attorney General - Ministry of Attorney General - Krysia Strawczynski Deputy Minister - Ministry of Health and Minister Responsible for Seniors
f) Internal Ministry Delegation Ministries to review their internal financial, personnel, administrative and communications policy, practices and approval matrices and push decision making down to the level directly responsible. Attorney General, Regional and Economic Development, Government Management Services, and Transportation and Highways to report initial progress March 31, 1991.	- Transportation and Highways regional and district bank accounts set up to allow designated staff to make payments not exceeding \$1,000.00. Approximately 80% of payments will now be made by cheque, considerably shortening the long payment cycle. - Working capital bank accounts have been set up in 7 Attorney General cost centres to directly pay suppliers up to \$100, on a pilot basis. - A new ministry financial signing authority matrix in Government Management Services delegates broad responsibility to the lowest appropriate level. - A new spending authority matrix in the Regional Development Division of the Ministry of Regional and Economic Development delegates increased authority to \$100,000 for ADM, \$50,000 for directors, and \$25,000 to other managers at discretion of ADM.	ON TARGET	- Robert A. Edwards Deputy Attorney General - Ministry of Attorney General - Philip G. Halkett Deputy Minister - Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism - Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister - Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families - Vince M. Collins Deputy Minister - Ministry of Transportation and Highways
5. RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS a) Front-line service delivery positions/classifications to be reviewed to ensure adequate recognition and weighting is given to service delivery competencies.	Guidelines are being developed for ministries to better use current classification system.	ON TARGET June 30, 1991	Clary Moser Chairman, Personnel Services Council

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
b) Recommendations dealing with the broad based expressions of concern about the inadequacies of the current management classification system to be brought forward for Deputy Ministers' Council review.	Human Resources subcommittee of Council of Deputy Ministers' to review relationship of headquarters/regional classifications to job responsibilities and report to council with recommendations.	ON TARGET April 27, 1991	Doug Horwill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (GPSD)
	GPSD has submitted recommendations related to classification creep at 1-5 levels; rigidities at 6-8 level; and retention and recruitment problems to Human Resources subcommittee of Council of Deputy Ministers'.	With Deputy Ministers' Council	
c) Endorse GPSD's plan for an automated classification information system with remote access capability, to be developed for government wide use.	- RFP issued and bids received for a gender-neutral pay equity plan which uses computer software and in future can be used by ministries. - Negotiations with the union regarding selection of the successful vendor.	ON TARGET April 30, 1991	Doug Horwill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (GPSD)
6. MAKE SERVICE QUALITY MATTER			
a) Develop a management performance planning, review and reward system which gives appropriate emphasis to promoting and supporting the management practices embodied within a customer focused organization.	Task force of ministry/GPSD human resources specialists appointed and tasks assigned.	ON TARGET July 1, 1991	Doug Horwill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (GPSD)
b) GPSD and ministry personnel directors redevelop the performance review format for included employees incorporating criteria for evaluating service to internal and/or external customers.	All ministries reviewing their performance review systems.	ON TARGET April 30, 1991	Gary Moser Chairman, Personnel Services Council (to include all Personnel Directors and GPSD)
7. ENSURE SUPPORTIVE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT POLICIES			
a) Northern Staffing and Retention	- GPSD has recommended to Treasury Board an increase in relocation assistance for new employees. - Mileage rates now adjusted to .28/km and no lowering of rate after 13,000 km. - Private vehicle damage increased to a maximum of \$500 where an employee's car is damaged as a result of being employed directly by the employer. - Ministries have provided data from pilot locations regarding housing rates.		Doug Horwill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations (GPSD)

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
b) New FTE Monitoring Procedures Recommended that the consultants' report on the simplification of the systems used to monitor and report FTE usage, prepared for the SFO Council (June 1990), be implemented. Implementation by March 31, 1991.	• Submission to Treasury Board regarding consistent housing rates in draft stage. • Terms of delegation of authority regarding out of province newspaper advertising being prepared. GPSD will seek Minister's approval of delegation. • Work plan developed and approved • MFCR has reviewed SFO Council report recommendations (e.g., practicality of standard adjustments). • Advisory group of deputies chaired by Deputy Minister of Finance has reviewed outstanding issues. • Determine policy options and review current timetable. • Seek Treasury Board approval for any proposed changes.	To be determined	Doug Horswill Deputy Minister Ministry of Finance and Corporation Relations (Treasury Board Staff)
BUILD RESPONSIVE CENTRAL AGENCIES			
a) Facilities Project Management	B.C. Buildings Corporation with selected ministries to pilot a project management approach to new facilities where all corporate involvement in the facility (marketing, development, administration, real estate, and property management) is managed by a single project manager with full authority to act as the sole ministry contact.	ON TARGET	- Dennis Truss President and CEO B.C. Buildings Corporation - Philip Halkett Deputy Minister Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism - Robert A. Edwards, Q.C. Deputy Attorney General Ministry of Attorney General
		July 15, 1991	
		August 15, 1991	
b) Market Approach to Facilities Management	B.C. Buildings Corporation to explore the feasibility of operating in a competitive environment in some aspects of its mandate (e.g., maintenance, management of stand alone, single purpose units).	ON TARGET	Dennis Truss President and CEO B.C. Buildings Corporation
		To be determined by Deputy Ministers	

SERVICE QUALITY B.C.
BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT/PRIORITIES	PROGRESS TO DATE	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
c) Regional Systems Maintenance B.C. Systems Corporation and Purchasing Commission, in partnership with ministries, to pilot a regional approach to the: • maintenance and repair of network systems and equipment. • provision of technology training. • hands-on support of front line staff in the use of this equipment.	• Met with ministry end users in pilot areas to determine requirements. • Request for Information issued to identify supplier skills in pilot areas. • BCSC manager to be placed in region. • Start implementation project with Environment. • Local maintenance contracts to be established with qualified suppliers.	ON TARGET April 26, 1991 April 29, 1991 May 23, 1991	W. E. Evans President B.C. Systems Corporation Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Responsible for Families (Purchasing Commission)
d) Value Added Vehicle Management Vehicle Management Branch, Purchasing Commission to address all significant issues identified by ministry clients and propose new, customer responsive services.	• Customer focus groups held in Prince George, Kamloops, Nelson, and Vancouver • 31 recommendations from VMB/Ministry review team accepted for implementation in 91/92 fiscal year. • All VMB regional staff have completed SQ training modules. • Quarterly customer reviews to continue	ON TARGET	Isabel Kelly Deputy Minister Ministry of Women's Programs and Government Services and Minister Responsible for Families (Purchasing Commission)
9. MONITOR PROGRESS a) A report to be prepared summarizing the progress and success of the various pilots, and recommendations for the future.	• Complete with submission of this report	ON TARGET	Service Task Force and Secretariat Chairpersons (W. D. Mitchell and D. B. Marston)

II. SERVICE TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Emphasize Clients and Customers

Service quality is government's commitment to its customers and clients that they will receive absolutely the best service we can provide - service which is focused on their needs and expectations.

Over the past six months, emphasis has been placed on surveying public servants and analyzing internal policies and procedures. While this has been necessary, and results have been encouraging, ministries must not lose sight of service quality's primary objective - improving the quality of the products and service government provides to the public.

Understanding the client's priorities allows ministries to set clear, measurable, achievable performance benchmarks, assess progress, and continually improve.

Defining customers/clients, and taking every opportunity to solicit their views on how government could better meet their needs and expectations, must now be ministries' first priority as they move into the next stage of service quality.

Recommendation #1

It is recommended that obtaining external customer feedback be Service Quality B.C.'s number one priority over the next six months, using such instruments as questionnaires, customer surveys, and focus groups.

Projects undertaken in the Ministries of Attorney General - Court Services Branch; Finance and Corporate Relations - Office of the Comptroller General; Lands and Parks; Labour and Consumer Services - Liquor Distribution Branch; and Agriculture, Fisheries and Food serve as useful models.

The corporate initiatives, Enquiry B.C. (toll-free information line) and the B.C. Guide, are valuable tools for improving service to the public. With the implementation of a province-wide, toll-free information line, the public will have a single access point for information on all B.C. government programs, and switchboard staff will be able to refer callers immediately to the appropriate telephone number. With the publication of the B.C. Guide, the public will be able to quickly find the specific number to call for any government program or service.

This means, however, that ministries must ensure there are sufficient resources available (telephones and personnel) to handle all callers and provide excellent customer service. For some programs, this will mean adding to existing resources and training personnel.

Recommendation #2

It is recommended that ministries ensure that they have in place sufficient resources and properly trained staff to guarantee the success of these initiatives.

B. Sustain Enthusiasm and Build Commitment

In order to succeed, Service Quality B.C. must have senior management's commitment. It is senior management that is in the position to create and communicate a vision of service quality and make it matter.

The Service Task Force was impressed with the favourable response from field staff to the visits of the Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Regional Operations and Enforcement Department, B.C. Environment, and others during February and March. Notable too, were the number of comments from staff whose senior management were not visible to their regional operations. Many were still looking for concrete evidence of their own ministry management's commitment to service quality.

Ministry service quality coordinators have observed that visible and active support from executive management is vital to their success. Service quality is capable of succeeding on its own merits, but can be easily side-tracked in its infancy if it is not recognized and reinforced as a critical element in ministry planning and operations.

With progress well underway towards accomplishing the initial objectives of the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan, the consensus of the task force members is that an ongoing strategy is needed to sustain enthusiasm and commitment and build on early successes. By the end of the 1991-92 fiscal year, service quality should be part of the way ministries conduct their business.

It is important to note that service quality cannot be the sole responsibility of any individual ministry service quality coordinator or service quality team. Many coordinators are finding that the task is simply too large to be completed off the corner of their desks, leading to frustration on the part of many. All operational managers must accept personal responsibility for outstanding customer and client service.

Recommendation #3

It is recommended that each ministry be charged with preparing an annual service quality action plan as part of its ministry business plan. Executive Management should also report on the plan's progress to all ministry staff. Individual managers should be responsible and accountable for meeting service quality objectives set for their unit.

Recommendation #4

It is recommended that all ministries maintain the service quality coordinator position for the 1991-92 fiscal year. It is further recommended that service quality coordinators in large, regionally based ministries be appointed on a full-time basis for the 1991-92 fiscal year. Coordinators should have ready access to the ministry's executive committee, and be invited to participate in the ministry's strategic planning.

Some ministries may wish to continue with a coordinator position past 1991-1992 to provide continuity and a focus for their service quality activities. However, in other cases service quality may be sufficiently institutionalized in ministry operations to the point that a single position may be neither necessary nor desirable.

In the long term it is important that service quality be a standing agenda item at the Council of Deputy Ministers, to maintain the profile of service quality, and ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to it. This could take the form of either:

- i) Regular reports to the council through a standing subcommittee of Deputy Ministers or operational Assistant Deputy Ministers mandated to report on corporate and ministry service quality initiatives. The subcommittee should also make recommendations regarding service quality matters as it deems appropriate.

or

- ii) Quarterly progress reports from each Deputy Minister to the Deputy Ministers' Council.

With either option, it is important that the Deputy Ministers' Council regularly report to all provincial public servants on the progress achieved.

Recommendation #5

It is recommended that the Deputy Ministers' Council adopt either option i) or ii) to maintain the profile of service quality on an ongoing basis.

Regardless of which option is selected, additional resources will be required. The Service Task Force recommends that a senior manager be seconded to carry out the function. The individual would also be responsible for liaison with the Centre for Executive and Management Development.

C. Act on the Commitment to Training

Progress to date, and a second round of regional visits, have reinforced task force views on the need for ongoing job-related training. The most frequently heard comments from staff in the second round of regional visits related to training. New employee orientation must be improved. More task specific training is critical.

Access to training is often dependent on the effective use of training dollars. Training for regional staff, especially those in central and northern B.C., continues to be hampered by budgets which make insufficient allowance for the costs associated with travelling to training centres, severely limiting the number of staff who can participate. Staff also expressed frustration with the inconsistent availability of training in different ministries.

Both union and management staff require training that provides:

- Ministry orientation,
- Program knowledge,
- Customer service skills, and
- Service quality leadership skills.

Recommendation #6

It is recommended that Deputy Ministers reaffirm their commitment to training and allocate the necessary funds, particularly for staff in centres outside of Victoria and the Lower Mainland. Specifically, each ministry should allocate training dollars at a minimum of 3 percent of total annual salary costs. This target will be met over a three-year period. In addition, the percentage of training dollars to staff outside Victoria and the Lower Mainland should be proportional to the percentage of ministry staff in those areas. In order to assist staff with travel expenses related to training opportunities, each ministry should allocate \$500.00 per full time equivalent outside Victoria and the Lower Mainland to demonstrate commitment to equity of training opportunities throughout the province.

Recommendation #7

It is recommended that government-wide standards be developed for orientation, job content and service quality training. There is a need for a corporate approach identifying clear expectations and establishing standards for training across all ministries. A corporate approach would also provide opportunities to realize savings through economies of scale.

D. Provide a Regional Focus

During February and March 1991, Service Task Force and Service Quality B.C. Secretariat members, accompanied by ministry service quality coordinators, met with staff across the province in a second round of regional visits. Outside of Victoria and Greater Vancouver, the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan initiatives, particularly the access to government projects, were well received. Front-line staff demonstrated a keen awareness of the public's needs.

A number of staff outside Victoria have commented that service quality is Victoria-based and process-driven. Public servants throughout the province want to see what impact service quality has on their working environment and how it can help them serve their clients better.

There is an ongoing need to respond to the interest and enthusiasm of regional operations staff throughout the province. It is impossible for a service quality coordinator in Victoria to respond to all of the needs of staff across the province.

Recommendation #8

In order to maintain the enthusiasm that currently exists, it is recommended that larger, regionalized ministries ensure that regional service quality interests are recognized, that government and ministry wide initiatives are communicated to the regions and that there is a focus for regionally generated projects.

The task force favours regional service quality action plans, with individual managers being responsible and accountable for meeting service quality objectives tailored to local customer/client needs.

E. **Increase Participation in Victoria and Greater Vancouver**

Disappointing turnouts at regional meetings in Victoria and Greater Vancouver suggest that the service quality message is not reaching or being accepted by the majority of public servants in these major centres. Addressing the issue of urban staff working in large regional and headquarters offices will be one of the most important priorities in the coming year.

Recommendation #9

It is recommended that ministries identify practical, effective means to involve all staff in Victoria and Greater Vancouver in their service quality activities.

This could include among other things service quality presentations offered on a ministry or branch basis in Victoria and Vancouver; service quality as a regular agenda item at staff meetings; and divisional managers charged with responsibility for developing unit specific service quality initiatives. Service quality criteria should be incorporated into all branch and individual performance plans and appraisals for the coming year.

F. Involve Middle and Senior Level Management

One of the disappointments of the recent round of regional visits across the province was the limited number of middle and senior level managers that participated.

Managing a service quality environment can be more challenging because uncertainty, flexibility, experimentation, risk-taking and learning from failures are encouraged. For many, especially middle managers accustomed to a different way of doing business, this can be potentially threatening and confusing.

Failure to bring middle and senior level managers, from second level supervisors to executive directors, into the picture would be fatal to service quality's success. Other organizations have found that even with flatter structures, middle managers' creativity and resourcefulness, knowledge and experience, and their variety of skills, including setting objectives, coaching, informing, criticising, educating, and mobilizing resources, are required. To capitalize on their strengths, middle and senior level managers must be given a clear idea of how a flatter organization structure should work and what performance benchmarks executive management expects them to achieve.

Recommendation #10

It is recommended that the role of middle and senior level management in the service quality organization be defined, and training in the new skills necessary be provided. The Centre for Executive and Management Development should be mandated to provide such a course.

Recommendation #11

It is recommended that Deputy Ministers and executive management meet regularly with directors, program heads and branch managers to describe their expectations of middle and senior level management and reinforce the new operating framework. It is further recommended that each ministry specifically incorporate an assessment of these skills in its performance appraisals for management staff.

Executive briefings to joint meetings of management and staff are also recommended as a means of further involving middle and senior level management.

G. **Develop a Corporate Service Quality Commitment**

An important observation made by managers and staff in the original round of regional visits was that one of the greatest frustrations faced by government's clients and customers is the lack of a corporate perspective. The public, especially those with special needs, are segmented to accommodate government's organizational structure. The Child and Youth Secretariat provides a valuable example of how government can bring together various branches of several ministries to provide a single, clear focus for program delivery.

As with the first round of visits, the second round illustrated how ministry/division/branch bound government is. To establish a more corporate perspective, significant steps will have to be taken.

Recommendation #12

It is recommended that other inter-ministerial community councils similar to the one in Fort St. John be developed. Public servants should be encouraged to view their clients' needs from a more corporate perspective. Specifically, by the end of 1991-92 it is recommended councils be created in Nanaimo, Chilliwack, Cranbrook, Nelson, Kelowna, Kamloops, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, and Williams Lake.

If accepted, the Fort St. John council, in cooperation with the Service Quality B.C. Secretariat, should prepare an operating framework, including an ongoing monitoring mechanism by May 30, 1991 to guide the new councils.

H. Ensure a Balanced Approach

The second round of regional visits highlighted again that in large, regionally based ministries disparities between headquarters and regional operations can easily develop in terms of resource allocation, training, backfilling and the physical working environment. In some ministries, there is a perception that a headquarters emphasis diverts resources and management attention away from front-line operations. In others, the opposite is perceived to be the case. It is worth observing that real and perceived inequities between various branches of some ministries may result in counter-productive rivalry and limit a ministry's ability to "fire on all cylinders" and capitalize on the enthusiasm of all staff.

Recommendation #13

It is recommended that Deputy Ministers enter into dialogue with staff to ascertain whether disparity is perceived to be an issue in their ministries and take appropriate action. It is further recommended that Deputy Ministers communicate to ministry staff the rationale behind management decisions affecting resource allocation, training opportunities, and the physical working environment.

Some ministries, for example, involve a broad cross-section of staff in their business plan process, and brief staff on their budgets.

I. Partners in Performance and Central Agencies

1. Partners in Performance

Considerable progress has been made in improving the relationship between the B.C. Buildings Corporation and ministries as outlined in the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan update. Likewise, work is now underway with the Vehicle Management Branch of the Purchasing Commission to provide more customer responsive service.

2. Treasury Board and Treasury Board Staff

As in the case of the B.C. Buildings Corporation, the "Partners in Performance" principle is demonstrated in the preparation of a "Statement of Operating Principles" by Treasury Board Staff. Further change can only occur with Treasury Board Staff when there is a shift by Treasury Board in its control focus. The issue is whether Treasury Board perceives itself as essentially a control agency or as a facilitating body that assists ministries in achieving their objectives within definite parameters. While recognizing the need for effective financial controls, ministries would like to see Treasury Board and Treasury Board Staff shift their emphasis from an input orientation to an output oriented focus.

Recommendation #14

It is recommended that Treasury Board and Treasury Board Staff shift their emphasis to an output orientated focus where Deputy Ministers are held accountable for achieving ministry objectives within budgetary limits but are given the latitude to allocate budget funds as they deem appropriate to attain those objectives.

3. Government Personnel Services Division (GPSD)

In the human resource management sphere, there are few areas where ministries are requesting that GPSD delegate them further authority. Ministries currently have considerable scope and freedom to make changes to reflect the service quality style of management and operation. However, there is a need for GPSD to revise the classification weighting system. There is also an opportunity for GPSD to function in a corporate leadership role as ministries endeavour to implement the organizational and human resources management changes inherent in the transformation toward a customer service focus.

Recommendation #15

In the area of classification weighting, it is recommended that the system be revised to value more highly those factors related to direct delivery of service to the public and supervision of these functions, as opposed to the current system where considerably more points are given to dealing with senior public servants and the ministerial level.

Recommendation #16

It is recommended that GPSD, in conjunction with the Personnel Council which it chairs, be accountable to the Deputy Ministers' Council for annually recommending and then reporting progress on achieving a plan of initiative which will ensure that the B.C. Public Service is in a position to attract, retain, and continuously develop a pool of management and staff resources and provide an organizational climate necessary to achieve its service quality objectives. It is recommended that the personnel management projects identified within the Service Quality B.C. Business Plan and now initiated be this plan for 1991-92 for which GPSD and the Personnel Council are initially accountable.

J. Role of Technology

Technology applications that are requirement driven and effectively applied are among the most powerful solutions available in support of achieving our service quality goals. Progress is being made throughout government on the effective application of technology to improve service quality. There is, however, a continuing requirement to increase the general awareness of the value of technology and innovation. Working smarter is a legitimate alternative to working harder. More importantly, government must acknowledge that encouraging innovation involves a willingness to accept calculated risk taking, and a tolerance of learning through experience.

The Science and Technology Action Plan (STAP), managed by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, is designed to facilitate and accelerate the application of cost effective technology throughout government. The Ministry of Transportation and Highways, as an example, has structured a venture that will improve quality and service, and reduce the costs associated with the design of bridges. It is an innovative approach involving partnerships within government and the private sector, and is supported by STAP. Government needs to encourage more of this type of initiative.

Recommendation #17

It is recommended that the objectives of the British Columbia Science and Technology Policy be incorporated into all ministries' annual business plans.

K. Service Quality Identification

Service quality itself provides an opportunity for ministries to take a more corporate approach. The task force believes that "Service Quality B.C." has been misunderstood to mean the activities of the Secretariat. Many successful, customer oriented initiatives are going unrecognized as service quality activities because they have not been labelled as such.

Recommendation #18

It is recommended that the phrase "Service Quality B.C." be recognized as the formal government identification for all service quality activities across government.

L. Role of the Service Quality B.C. Secretariat

To date, the Service Quality B.C. Secretariat has provided an essential focus for service quality activities across government. Its objective to provide information, materials and project liaison which directly address ministries' needs and requirements has allowed it to successfully "jump start" government's service quality initiative. The Service Task Force believes that the Secretariat should maintain its focus on providing materials and support directly related to the needs of ministry operations.

The task force's view is that a continued, government wide focus is required to:

- Complete government-wide service quality projects under way.
- Ensure that the progress of service quality coordinators in facilitating their ministry initiatives continues.
- Provide a framework for subsequent training programs.

The task force is confident that these objectives can be met within the Secretariat's original mandate to complete its work by September 30, 1991. Subject to Deputy Ministers' review, an extension of its mandate to December 31, 1991 may be warranted.

Recommendation #19

It is recommended that the Secretariat wind down its operations no later than December 31, 1991. It is further recommended that the training and resource centre functions be integrated with the Centre for Executive and Management Development. Service Quality B.C. would continue to be a standing agenda item for the Council of Deputy Ministers as outlined in Recommendation #5 (page 16). The service quality coordinators council would continue in place.

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- R. Nancy Greer
- Robert F. Cronin
- L. T. Foster
- John Thompson
- Ian B. McKinnon
- James B. Garton